United Nations A/C.6/55/SR.27

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
24 November 2000

Original: English

Sixth Committee

Summary record of the 27th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 13 November 2000, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Politi ..... (Italy)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 164: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (A/55/37 and 179 and Add.1; A/C.6/55/L.2)

1. **Mr. Perera** (Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee), speaking also as the Chairman of the Working Group of the Sixth Committee, said that the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 required that Committee to address, first, the outstanding issues relating to the elaboration of the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and, secondly, the question of convening a high-level conference to formulate a joint organized response by the international community to terrorism in all its forms. Negotiations concerning the draft convention had been held during the 1998 sessions of the Ad Hoc Committee and the Sixth Committee, but although substantial progress had been achieved it had not been possible to resolve the issue of the scope of the convention. By February 2000 positions had not yet come close enough for open-ended informal consultations to be convened and consultations were continuing on a bilateral basis. He urged all delegations to accept the need for compromise.

2. The text of the draft convention, which was based on the proposal submitted by the Indian delegation at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, had been revised in the light of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and on the basis of comments and suggestions from delegations. In September 2000 the Working Group had given a first reading to articles 1-22 and the preamble, with a view to clarifying the key issues and identifying articles which might require further discussion in informal consultations. The deliberations had reflected the complexity and diversity of the issues involved but also the willingness of all delegations to work constructively and make progress. It was clear that the draft convention provided a good basis for negotiation. The exchange of views had been both conceptual and specific. Most of the key issues had been identified. One was the question of the scope of the draft convention and its relationship to existing conventions. Some believed that it should cover all aspects of terrorism, including those regulated by existing conventions, while others considered that it should fill the gaps of existing conventions. Another issue was the definition of terrorism that should be adopted. Useful progress had been made and he drew the Committee's attention to the Working Group's recommendation that the work on elaborating the convention should continue.

3. With regard to the question of convening a high-level conference on terrorism, informal discussions had, after a preliminary exchange of views in the Ad Hoc Committee, continued during the year. Interested delegations had been invited to make specific proposals on how to proceed further but so far none had been received.

4. **Mr. Singh** (India) said that the discussions on the draft convention in the Working Group had shown that the draft text submitted by his delegation was generally considered a good basis for concluding a convention. Consensus needed to be achieved, however, in respect of the scope and definition of offences, the relationship between the draft convention and existing conventions and the need for and content of annexes attached to the draft convention. He hoped that the revised draft of several articles, including article 2, submitted by his delegation, would enable agreement to be reached on some of those issues.

5. As the Prime Minister of India and other speakers at the Millennium Summit had said, international terrorism, with its links to religious extremism, drug trafficking and the illicit arms trade, constituted the most dangerous threat to peace, democracy and development. It affected all societies, particularly pluralistic and open democracies. Following over a decade of cross-border terrorism that had claimed thousands of lives, his Government had accorded high priority to the conventions on the subject. It had ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and was taking the necessary steps to ratify the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. A comprehensive convention on international terrorism would effectively supplement the existing conventions and deny safe havens to terrorists anywhere in the world.

6. **Mr. Alabrune** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries of Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania,

Slovakia and Slovenia, and, in addition, Norway, said that the European Union unreservedly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whatever cause might be invoked in justification and whoever the perpetrators. The increase in terrorist acts such as aircraft hijackings and hostage-taking was a matter of particular concern. In order to combat international terrorism, the international community must arm itself with effective cooperation instruments which both respected human rights and addressed the political and human issues that constituted the factors of instability on which terrorist groups fed.

7. All European Union member States were parties to the 1977 European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, which had laid the groundwork for European cooperation in that area, while the Council Act of 27 September 1996 drawing up a protocol to the European Convention on Extradition was also a useful tool. The desire for European harmonization was reflected in the introduction into the domestic law of member States of strict regulations governing the handling of explosives. Efforts had been stepped up to prevent and reduce the threat of transnational terrorism by exchanges of information, which since July 1999 had been handled by the European Police Office (Europol). Cooperation with other States had also intensified, particularly with associated States of the European Union. Close contacts were maintained with the United States and the Russian Federation. It was hoped to increase dialogue with the Mediterranean coastal States and a programme of assistance to the Palestinian Authority had been set up.

8. The numerous conventions adopted under the auspices of the United Nations, dealing with specific categories of terrorist acts, were the fruit of a sectoral approach and the Ad Hoc Committee had worked on the same principles in adopting the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, which had been signed by all 15 member States of the European Union, and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, signed by a majority of European Union member States. The European Union was also in favour of rapidly concluding the draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism.

9. The sectoral approach had proved highly satisfactory, but the European Union considered that, as suggested by General Assembly resolution 54/110, it would be appropriate to elaborate a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, to be integrated into a series of conventions dealing with the issue as a whole. It therefore considered that negotiations should continue within the Ad Hoc Committee.

10. Piecemeal action taken against international terrorism was also welcome. States and organizations had transmitted information on measures taken at the national and regional levels and it was to be hoped that a compendium of domestic laws and regulations on terrorism would be published shortly. The International Atomic Energy Agency, too, had taken useful action to prevent and suppress the illegal traffic in nuclear and other radioactive materials, as well as making valuable recommendations concerning nuclear sabotage. The information provided by the International Civil Aviation Organization, showing that criminal acts relating to civil aviation had declined during the 1990s, was evidence of the efficacy of the instruments adopted for guaranteeing the safety of aircraft, even though recent events had shown that vigilance was still required.

11. **Mr. Valdivieso** (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that it unequivocally condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism, wherever and by whomsoever committed. It was convinced that the strengthening of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism would lead eventually to the elimination of that scourge. By convening two inter-American specialized conferences on terrorism, the States members of the Group had promoted concerted action within the hemisphere to strengthen cooperation between their Governments in that field.

12. The Declaration and Plan of Action of Lima to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate Terrorism had been adopted at the first Inter-American Specialized Conference on Terrorism, held in Peru in 1996. The Commitment of Mar del Plata, in which the States of the region had reiterated their condemnation of terrorist acts and pledged to combat terrorism on the basis of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, international law and the principles of non-intervention and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, had been adopted at the second Specialized Conference, held in Argentina in 1998.

13. Pursuant to one of the recommendations contained in the Commitment of Mar del Plata, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States had, on 7 June 1999, established the Inter-

American Committee against Terrorism as an appropriate institutional framework for promoting cooperation in that field. At its first meeting, held in October 1999, the Committee had considered its plan of work, including, inter alia, the creation of an inter-American databank on questions related to terrorism, advocating measures to combat the collection of funds for terrorist activities, designing technical cooperation programmes and training activities, and providing assistance to States in the elaboration of national anti-terrorist legislation.

14. At the United Nations, the Rio Group had actively supported all initiatives aimed at strengthening the international legal framework for combating terrorism. The adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings in 1997 and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism in 1999 represented a significant achievement in that field. The Rio Group underscored the importance of the entry into force of those conventions and hoped that the consultations being coordinated by the delegation of Australia on the draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism would lead to the adoption of a text that reflected in a balanced way the concerns of all delegations.

15. The delegations on whose behalf he spoke noted with satisfaction that the Working Group had begun negotiations on a comprehensive legal framework of conventions dealing with international terrorism, based on the draft submitted by India.

16. In the light of the debates in the Working Group, the Rio Group believed that the Ad Hoc Committee should address two questions on a priority basis, namely, the legal definition of the crime of terrorism and the scope of the draft convention and its relationship to the international treaties in force.

17. The Rio Group was aware of the broad mandate given to the Ad Hoc Committee by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/110 and supported the negotiation and future adoption of a convention on terrorism that could become an effective and universally accepted instrument for enhancing cooperation by States in that area.

18. The Rio Group considered that terrorism was different from other crimes because of its objectives. It believed that the legal definition contained in article 2 of the draft convention proposed by India should focus on the main objective of terrorism, which was to inflict terror on a population or to oblige a government or an international organization to take or refrain from taking a certain action. On the other hand, in accordance with inter-American norms, the Group believed that none of the provisions of the convention should impair the right of States to grant asylum, where appropriate.

19. With regard to the proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism, the objectives and possible results of such a conference must be carefully examined. The holding of the conference could foster a climate of trust and facilitate consensus among States on the elaboration of specific mechanisms for international cooperation to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism.

20. **Mr. Al-Shamsi** (United Arab Emirates) said that terrorism was largely motivated by extremism or was a violent reaction to situations of oppression, frustration and despair. It was unrelated to geographical location, culture or religious belief and he therefore urged transparency and objectivity in addressing the subject. His country had taken various measures to combat all aspects of terrorism and had strengthened cooperation with neighbouring States and with regional and international organizations with a view to strengthening monitoring activities and exchanging information so as to combat crime and terrorism. It had also ratified a number of the international instruments relating to terrorism.

21. He was deeply concerned by the biased media campaigns which linked Arabs and Islam with international terrorism and called on the international community to make a distinction between terrorism and the national struggle of peoples under colonial domination and foreign occupation for restoration of their legitimate rights. He was equally concerned by the terrorist practices and systematic killing and violence inflicted on the Palestinian people by the Israeli occupation forces and heavily armed extremist settlers. He urged the United Nations to provide protection for the Palestinian people and, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, to prevail on Israel to end its aggression against the Palestinian people, their homes and their property, and to cooperate in an independent legal inquiry that would ensure prosecution of the Israeli officials responsible for causing that human tragedy. He affirmed his

country's support for all international and regional efforts to combat the roots of terrorism, including those aimed at elaborating a comprehensive convention on international terrorism and at convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

22. **Mr. Mwakawago** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said that in the past four years the Sixth Committee had made significant and worthwhile contributions to the fight against terrorism. Terrorists took advantage of the inadequacies of international legal instruments to elude justice and accountability. Sovereign States could no longer cope single-handed with the threat of international terrorism. The challenge to the international community was to overcome those constraints.

23. In fighting terrorism, a country was required to be concerned with such questions as the source of the evidence and how it was obtained. Acquiring evidence across international frontiers added a number of procedural dimensions that must be regulated. Not surprisingly, territorial borders and their corresponding jurisdictions tended to hamper investigations.

24. SADC supported the recent landmark international conventions on the suppression of terrorist bombings and the suppression of the financing of terrorism. Those instruments targeted specific areas of concern to the international community and facilitated the establishment of specific rules of international law applicable to particular manifestations of terrorism.

25. The terrorist bombings in Cape Town, Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi in 1998 were a grim reminder to the SADC countries of the scope of terrorist activities. While the international community had come a long way since the adoption of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism of 1994 and its 1996 supplement, the network of international cooperation must be expanded and strengthened. In that context, SADC welcomed the working document submitted by the Government of India for a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

26. SADC also noted the continuing efforts to resolve the outstanding issues relating to the elaboration of an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. SADC expressed its willingness to negotiate, in the context of the position adopted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, to overcome the differences that had impeded an early adoption of the draft convention.

27. **Mr. Karev** (Russian Federation) said that terrorism had become one of the most dangerous challenges to humanity. Increasingly, its victims were innocent people, and it was sustained by drug trafficking, the illicit arms trade and the laundering of the proceeds of crime. No individual State could fence itself off from the phenomenon of terrorism, because the various breeds of extremists had taken advantage of the modern ease of communications to set up their own "terrorist international", with the same terrorist groups operating in quite different regions. A new and worrying arc of terrorist activity had been formed, running from the Balkans across the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia to Afghanistan, where the territories under the control of the Taliban had become a prime source of terrorist activity. The combined efforts of all States would be required to stop the spread of terrorism.

28. The United Nations was called upon to play the key coordinating role in those efforts. In 1994, the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism had precluded any attempt to justify terrorist activity by stating that terrorist acts were criminal and unjustifiable in any circumstances. The mobilization of international potential to combat terrorism should be based on firm principles, especially Security Council resolution 1269 (1999). Cooperation in that endeavour must be based on international law and on the maximum participation of States in existing international agreements. He urged all States to become parties to those agreements. The Russian Federation, for its part, had ratified the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, and intended to ratify the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The State Duma was also considering ratification of the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf, and the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings.

29. New instruments to combat terrorism were also needed. It was important to show flexibility and political will so that work on the draft comprehensive

convention on international terrorism submitted by India could be completed. The new convention would close existing gaps in the legal regime for cooperation against terrorism, and his delegation was prepared to play a constructive part in working on the text.

30. In recent years, the Russian Federation had had to deal with terrorist acts of appalling cruelty committed in its cities, including the capital, which had killed and wounded hundreds of people. The North Caucasus region was still the black spot, and matters were made worse by the material, moral and financial encouragement given to criminals there by various foreign terrorist and extremist organizations. Mercenaries were continually being sent to the Chechen Republic, in an attempt to turn it into a springboard for new attacks not confined to Russia itself.

31. The Government had adopted a number of decrees to protect the public and civil installations, to identify and destroy terrorist groups and criminal gangs and prevent them from entering Russian territory, and to cut off the trade in weapons and ammunition. For that purpose, it had updated the special Federal programme for combating crime for the period 1999-2000. Cooperation in combating terrorism was a high priority within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In 1999 the CIS members had concluded a treaty on the subject, and the Council of Heads of State of the CIS countries had recently approved a programme for anti-terrorist measures up to 2003 and decided to establish an anti-terrorist centre. The Council had also approved a programme of joint measures to combat crime, including terrorism, for the period 2000-2003.

32. **Mr. Hoffmann** (South Africa) associated his delegation with the statement made by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania on behalf of the member States of SADC. He welcomed the Committee's work on terrorism as an opportunity for the international community to reiterate its condemnation of all acts of terrorism. The Ad Hoc Committee and the Working Group were making steady progress, and their work would enhance the universal commitment to eliminate terrorism in all its forms.

33. In South Africa, the Law Commission had been reviewing national legislation with a view to implementing existing international conventions against terrorism. A comprehensive draft Terrorism Bill, based on those instruments, was currently under discussion. The adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism was a significant achievement, and his Government would sign it during the coming year.

34. He was grateful to the delegation of India for leading the initiative on elaborating a comprehensive convention on terrorism, which should complete the legal framework for combating the phenomenon. The new convention should, like its predecessors, opt for prosecution or extradition of offenders. It should not, however, do away with the existing compendium of anti-terrorism conventions, each of which had been painstakingly drafted to deal with specific acts of terrorism. He was aware that it would be no easy task to draft such a comprehensive instrument. The Working Group had already identified the conceptual problems involved and the scope of the work required. Evidently, sufficient time must be allocated to the topic for the next session of the Ad Hoc Committee. It was unfortunate that less progress had been achieved on finalizing the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, and on the high-level conference on terrorism. Preliminary discussions on the draft comprehensive convention had shown that the new instrument would impact on the Committee's past as well as its future work, and would therefore add a new dimension to debate on those two initiatives. The agenda for the Ad Hoc Committee and the Working Group for the coming year should take that new dimension into account, and should be planned so that all three items could be treated as complementary parts of the comprehensive legal framework of conventions against terrorism.

35. **Mr. Traore** (Burkina Faso) welcomed the work done by the delegation of India on the draft comprehensive convention. The concept of terrorism had been clarified, to some extent, by the 1999 OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism and the Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism. The former instrument defined terrorism as acts contrary to the criminal laws of the States Parties which endangered the lives or physical integrity of individuals, property or the environment, and which were perpetrated in order to create an atmosphere of fear, disrupt public services, engender a crisis situation or foment insurrection, and to induce a government or other entity or grouping to adopt or refrain from a

particular policy. The latter defined it as "any act of violence or threat thereof notwithstanding its motives or intentions perpetrated to carry out an individual or collective criminal plan with the aim of terrorizing people or threatening to harm them or imperilling their lives, honour, freedoms, security or rights ...". It exempted from the definition struggle or armed struggle against colonialism, occupation, foreign aggression and domination, to achieve liberation or self-determination in accordance with international law principles. The existing international conventions dealing with specific aspects of international terrorism contributed to a possible global definition by mentioning such acts as the unlawful seizure of aircraft, hostage-taking, and the financing of terrorism. For the purpose of defining the concept of terrorism, the elements which should form the basis of a definition were already present in those instruments. They included the threat or use of violence, the indiscriminate nature of the violence, its scale and targets, and the instilling of fear. The aim of elaborating a convention should be to leave no doubt how the law regarded certain acts.

36. Terrorism was an international phenomenon which must be suppressed without equivocation. No State was wholly immune to it, even the most powerful. His country was anxious for a clear, all-encompassing definition. The draft comprehensive convention should not become a fool's bargain; his delegation could not agree to hand over the tools of suppression to States which would then be able to define certain acts as acts of terrorism depending on their own strength and interests of the moment. He was surprised that the task of definition should be described as too problematic and a source of division among States. At the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly his delegation had pointed to the lack of a definition in the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and had emphasized the need for a comprehensive global instrument containing such a definition. The draft submitted by India was an excellent instrument for combating crime; however, terrorism was no ordinary crime, and the absence of a definition was a significant omission.

37. He endorsed the draft amendment submitted by Malaysia on behalf of the Islamic Conference. Only a shared perception of terrorism, clearly framed in terms of international law, could achieve practical results and secure joint action by States to overcome the phenomenon.

38. **Mr. Uykur** (Turkey) supported the statement made by France on behalf of the European Union. Terrorism posed a severe challenge to democracy, civil society and the rule of law. There was a direct link between the full enjoyment of human rights and combating terrorism, since it undermined the right to life, the right to live free of fear, and the right to liberty and security. Because individuals and groups, as well as States, could violate human rights, his Government took the view that they too had a responsibility for protecting and promoting them. Turkey, a country which had long suffered from terrorism, therefore called on the international community to take effective action against all the acts, methods and practices of terrorism, including the human rights violations committed by terrorist groups. Terrorism was not justifiable under any circumstances. States had an obligation to prevent and suppress acts of terrorism and to refrain from organizing, instigating, facilitating, financing, encouraging and tolerating such activities. International cooperation involved denying terrorists safe haven and the right of asylum. States must meet their commitments deriving from the existing body of international instruments against terrorism, while taking into account the evolving forms of terrorism. The Committee's work so far had focused on thematic instruments to combat terrorism, resulting in the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Turkey was in the process of ratifying the former instrument.

39. He welcomed the submission by India of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Such a convention would enhance the effectiveness of existing legal instruments. He hoped the momentum achieved in the Working Group during the current session of the General Assembly would be maintained in 2001 in the framework of the Ad Hoc Committee.

40. In addition to preparing international instruments, States and international organizations should also cooperate in implementing them. He hoped for increasing cooperation and information exchange between States and the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Centre for International Crime Prevention in Vienna. He also hoped that States would cooperate with the United Nations on issues such as the

promotion of terrorist acts in other countries through resources provided in their territories.

41. **Mr. Al-Thani** (Qatar) reiterated his country's condemnation of all forms of terrorism, which conflicted with the teachings of Islam and other religions. His delegation had participated in the discussions on the elaboration of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, which should address the questions overlooked in the existing conventions, primarily that of the definition of terrorism. Many States were looking forward to a distinction which separated terrorism from the right of peoples to self-determination and the legitimate struggle of peoples under foreign occupation, particularly where national liberation movements were concerned. The preamble should contain a reference to the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, and to international humanitarian law and human rights.

42. The gruesome images depicted in the media during recent weeks of the massacres and terrorist crimes committed against defenceless Palestinians by the Israeli military machine provided concrete proof that armed forces should not be excluded from the scope of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Their exclusion under the proposed article 18, paragraph 2, of the draft convention was tantamount to permitting such terrorist crimes against innocent civilians to be perpetrated with impunity, in disregard of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. As his delegation had already stated, the international community could not simply censure attacks on innocent women, children and elderly people without taking practical measures to secure the rights of the Palestinian people and their protection from the Israeli occupiers. One week earlier, Qatar had decided to demonstrate its solidarity with the Palestinian people in their harsh ordeal by closing the Israeli trade office in Doha as a result of Israel's decision to suspend the peace process and replace dialogue with force and violence.

43. The text of the draft comprehensive convention nevertheless provided a sound basis for the development of a convention that filled the gaps in the existing conventions on terrorism. He supported the convening of a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

44. **Mr. Gomaa** (Egypt) said that experience had proved that, irrespective of politics or geography, any State or people was vulnerable to terrorist acts. Egypt had been among the first to warn against the new danger of international terrorism and had waged a long-term campaign against it on all fronts. At the national level, it had taken various legislative and administrative measures aimed at eliminating terrorism, while at the regional level it had been the driving force behind the adoption of the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, and the Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism. At the international level, Egypt had signed and acceded to 11 conventions on international terrorism and urged all other States to follow suit. It had also participated effectively in the current discussions on the elaboration of new conventions aimed at suppressing terrorism and had responded to the Secretary-General's request for States to provide information on the national and international anti-terrorism measures they had adopted. He urged the States which had not yet done so to comply with that request in order to provide the benefit of their experience.

45. With reference to the ongoing United Nations efforts to combat terrorism and the special role played in that area by the Sixth Committee, his delegation had participated in drafting the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which it had signed during the Millennium Summit. The draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism was currently a major priority because the existing conventions on the subject were too narrow in scope to cover every aspect of the phenomenon. Again an effective participant in the drafting discussions, Egypt was seeking the inclusion of four elements in particular: first, an agreed definition of terrorism; secondly, a bar on political asylum for terrorists; thirdly, a bar on immunity for members of armed forces who perpetrated terrorist acts; and fourthly, a distinction between terrorist acts and the activities of national liberation movements and armed struggle against foreign occupation, which were legitimate means of acquiring the right to self-determination and independence. A case in point, which his country

supported, was the resistance of the Palestinian people to the Israeli occupation authorities, who practised all forms of terrorism against them.

46. Another priority was the elaboration of the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, in which connection he welcomed the efforts of its coordinator to explore the *ratione personae* scope of its provisions, as it was a source of concern to various delegations in view of the importance and delicacy of the related subjects. As for the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, such a conference would provide a suitable opportunity for intensive dialogue that would help to establish a comprehensive system for combating terrorism on the political, economic, technological and legal fronts. Egypt firmly believed that it would also convey a practical and political message to the entire world of the forceful intention to prevent and combat all terrorist activities in the future.

47. **Mr. Becker** (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that in the course of the debate certain delegations had sought to use the Committee as a forum for launching political and unsubstantiated accusations against his country. The work of the Committee was too important for it to be used to serve narrow political agendas. The Committee would fulfil its solemn responsibility in the fight against terrorism only if it proceeded in a spirit of consensus. He urged all delegations to conduct the debate in that spirit and to avoid partisan and offensive language.

48. If the representatives of those delegations which had spoken against his country were genuinely concerned about the scourge of terrorism in the Middle East, they would be talking about the importance of a return to the peace process. They would condemn all acts of terror, including the car bomb in the crowded Mahaneh Yehuda market which had claimed the lives of two Israeli civilians, the brutal mob lynching of two Israeli soldiers in Ramallah, and the desecration of various Jewish holy sites. Their commitment to the fight against terrorism would compel them to call on the Palestinian leadership to reincarcerate the convicted Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists released from Palestinian jails. They would call for security cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, in accordance with the agreements reached thus far. Their silence in that regard revealed more than it concealed about the real motives behind the current stalemate.

Agenda item 155: Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts (*continued*) (A/C.6/55/L.15)

49. **Mr. Nyman** (Sweden), introducing draft resolution A/C.6/55/L.15, said that it was the result of consultations and was similar to the previous years' resolutions. It stressed the importance of the existing body of international humanitarian law and of increasing wide acceptance of the two Additional Protocols. He drew attention to the third, sixth, seventh, tenth, eleventh and fourteenth preambular paragraphs and to paragraphs 4, 6, 9 and 10. In the tenth preambular paragraph, the first word had been changed from "Noting" to "Recalling". Paragraphs 4, 6, 9 and 10 were new. The following countries had joined the list of sponsors: Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Finland, Guinea, Moldova, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain and the United Kingdom. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution could be adopted without a vote.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.